

The cards don't lie

Written by 'Grammar Guy' By Curtis Honeycutt Guest Columnist
Friday, 15 December 2023 05:32



The difference between 'lay' and 'lie'

As Andy Williams reminds us once per hour on the local Christmas radio station: It's the most wonderful time of the year. I agree — the holiday season is full of warmth and tradition, with a dash of mirth for good measure. I can't wait to see my kids' faces light up as they open their presents on Christmas morning (I got them their own selfie ring lights).

Within the fond traditions of the holidays, we find some quirky and sometimes head-scratching lyrics in our favorite songs. It's time to clear up a few of these carol conundrums.

Let's jump to verse two of "Jingle Bells." I'm not referring to the elementary school version in which the Joker got away; instead, I want to focus on "...and then we got upsot."

In the story of "Jingle Bells," the song's hero is stealing away with one Miss Fanny Bright, when, all of a sudden, the subpar horse leading the sleigh causes the vehicle to overturn, leaving the sleigh capsized in a snowbank. The word "upsot" usually gets switched to "upset" in modern versions of the song, but here "upsot" means "capsized."

Have you listened to "Ding Dong Merrily on High" yet this season? I highly recommend the Rend Collective version (look it up on Spotify). In "Ding Dong," as the kids today call it, we hear some old-timey lyrics, including "Matin chime" and "evetime." While you can probably surmise,

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an “evetime song” is a song sung in the evening. A “Matin chime,” then, refers to bells ringing in the morning, as “Matin” refers to the morning prayers of the Anglican church.

Let me just tell you right now — if you drop this Noel knowledge on your friends, family and coworkers at your ho-ho-holiday get-togethers this season, you'll be the life of the party. You may even get to go home with a brand-new leg lamp. Just do me a favor and call an Uber for grandma — she's prone to getting into unfortunate accidents while walking home.

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